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The Nova High School is an educational experiment to make learning and achievement interesting, challenging, and exciting to the student. The program is based on the concept of individual progress with emphasis on quality education. Features of the school environment include air-conditioning, carpeting, multipurpose classrooms, individual study carrels, a complete weather station, and laboratories for advanced sciences. Students are made aware that responsibility for learning is their own and that the discovery of knowledge comes through the process of inquiry. Curriculums, lectures, lessons and activities are planned to encourage each student to assume major responsibility for his own learning and progress. Instructors are highly trained and imaginative; they are provided with teacher aids and clerical help. Team teaching is done in selected areas. Each instructor joins the student as an intellectual peer, and becomes a seeker in the adventure of learning. The curriculum emphasizes mastery of tool skills. Materials and activities allow for a wide range of learning levels. In addition to required courses, a wide range of electives is offered including architectural drawing and biochemistry. A trimester schedule of 11 months is in operation. Features of this organization include ungraded classes, flexible grouping, independent study time, and 70-minute periods. Automation features include closed-circuit television, a foreign language laboratory, a reading laboratory with reading machines, an overhead projector and screen at each teaching station, a data processing center, and two sound-equipped lecture halls.							
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Preview NOVA HIGH SCHOOL

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Office of Education

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A Short Description
of
The Plan
of
NOVA HIGH SCHOOL

A Division of the South Florida Education Center
Broward County Public Schools

Myron L. Ashmore
Arthur B. Wolfe

Superintendent of Public Instruction
Director of Nova High School

Organized and Written
by
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from

the published literature
of
THE NOVA PLAN

and

personal interviews
with
THE NOVA STAFF

1963

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THE NOVA PLAN

"No one knows how much and how fast
a youngster can learn under ideal conditions.
We aim to find out."

Arthur B. Wolfe
Director
Nova High School
South Florida Education Center

"One of the boldest experiments in education
manifested by a public school system." -

Bill Fenton, Editorial Writer
Fort Lauderdale News

DEDICATED TO

- The concept of individual progress
- Learning in a hard core curriculum
- Developing a thinking, questioning, reasoning and
responsible individual
- Emphasis on quality education
- Reformation of the education program, not a piece-
meal patching up
- A learning continuum from kindergarten to doctoral
degree.

"A monumental, breathtaking milestone
in education." - Mike Morgan, Miami Herald
Staff Writer

THE ENVIRONMENT

- Classrooms that shrink and expand
- Sound-proof, chalk-board equipped, push-button, movable partitions
- Completely air-conditioned
- Carpeting in all general areas
- Attractive, colorful furniture and fixtures
- Individual study carrels for student use
- Individual typewriting booths for student use
- Resource centers for each major curriculum area
- Experimental science laboratory for the advanced student
- Complete weather station
- Radiation laboratory
- Science laboratory units with colorful, ultra-modern chairs that raise or lower the student to match his height to the laboratory desks
- Complete laboratory equipment to perform college-level experiments
- Home science laboratory with elaborate demonstration tables and ranges with overhead viewing mirrors.
- Typing center with one hundred tables; typewriters that disappear into tables for versatile use of room. A cordless mike and amplifier for instructor's use. Teacher with microphone around neck speaks in normal tone, moving freely. Students hear directions clearly above noise of typing.

THE ENVIRONMENT - Continued

- Specially designed tilt-top mechanical drawing tables and contour chairs
- Centralized covered outdoor patio for student use for lunch, getting together to talk or study
- College-type campus
- Ultra modern buildings
- School plant designed for efficient use of time, space, staff and Nova's unique education program
- Each teacher with a private office with desk, book shelves and filing cabinets
- Educational specifications carefully and thoughtfully developed; plant and facilities then designed to achieve curricular aims.

"Nova so completely shatters tradition that its progress will be watched closely by educators everywhere." - G. K. Hodenfield, A.P. Education Writer

THE STUDENT

- Responsibility for learning rests upon the student
- Priority for admission given to the student who has an interest and willingness to attend school regularly and work to the best of his ability
- Parents who show evidence of willingness to co-operate with the school and who understand the aims of the Nova plan are requisites for acceptance of a student
- The student the focal point in the instructional process
- Student not asked to help with school chores that take him from any class session
- The adult product of Nova should
 - Show intellectual curiosity
 - Value and desire to make rational decisions
 - Develop mastery through understanding
 - Enjoy working with problems
 - Recognize and understand problems within his environment
 - Respond to problematic aspects of his environment in a logical and sequential manner
 - Apply an analytical viewpoint in seeking solutions to problems
 - Gain pleasure from the process of problem solving as well as from the final solution itself
 - Weigh optional solutions in terms of accuracy, rather than immediately accepting obtained solution
 - Seek out the wonders of "why" and gain satisfaction from finding out.

"It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge." - Albert Einstein

THE INSTRUCTOR

- Highly trained and skilled, with imaginative mind and strong desire to learn
- Master at selecting, preparing and presenting materials
- Qualified to ignite dormant enthusiasms in the student
- Continuous in-service training provided
- Assigned to teaching teams
- Provided with teacher aides and clerical help
- Utilization of community resources and community talents to assist teachers with those responsibilities which are not teacher skills.

"There have been no startling changes in educational matters for many years; Nova is the first attempt of its kind." - Morris L. Cogan, Harvard University

THE LEARNING PROCESS

- Instruction aimed at stimulating intellectual curiosity in the student
- Opportunity for the student to develop within himself the questing, exploring, probing curiosity
- Student given opportunity to use the process of inquiry
- Instruction aimed at inspiring student to put new knowledge to use, to apply it to his own life
- Opportunities for self-teaching by student
- Self-evaluation an important part of the learning process
- Associate knowledge for social and cultural development
- The scientific method used as a basic tool for all learning
 - observation - classification - measurement - experimentation
- Mastery of tool skills
- Use of new educational materials to sharply improve and enhance the learning process and go far beyond state requirements
- Provision made in materials and activities for wide range of learning levels.
- An abundance of reference and self-help materials beyond those offered by the traditional library made available to the student
- Library a daily center for independent learning
- Utilization of community resources and community talents to assist teachers

"Tell your people in Broward County the work they are doing there for education is the most important work in the country today." -

Harry Kelly, Associate Director
National Science Foundation

THE CURRICULUM

- Formulation of the curriculum by teachers
- Revision of curriculum materials by teachers
- Continuous revision of curriculum by teachers
- Emphasis on
 - Language Arts
 - Foreign Languages
 - Science
 - Mathematics
 - Social Sciences
 - Technical Sciences
- French, German, Russian, Spanish and Latin offered each year
- A laboratory science program
- College algebra and calculus
- Training in the vocational and technical skills to fit the needs of industry and the professions
- A wide range of electives
 - Music instruction for mastery of skills and development of appreciation in the humanities context

THE CURRICULUM - Continued

- Commercial art
- Fine art
- Engineering drawing
- Architectural drawing
- Electronics
- Radio techniques
- General communications techniques
- Television studio techniques
- Business education
- Bio-Chemistry

"America's outstanding educational experiment." -

Paul Rogers

Congressman from Florida

ORGANIZATION

- A reshuffled administrative setup
- First high school in the country to go on an eleven month, trimester schedule
- Six years of high school in four years
- Student applies for permission to be graduated as soon as his progress justifies it
- School year 40 days longer than national average requirements; 25 days longer than any other public school in the country
- A longer school day
- Optional extra hour for non-credit courses
- Ungraded classes
- Flexible grouping
- Large group instruction
- Middle group instruction
- Small group instruction
- Maneuverability of student grouping
- 70 minute classes
- Several hours of independent study in school each week.

"The concepts for the advancement of education being put together at South Florida Education Center come nearer to the realization of all our preachings since the establishment of this foundation." - Lester W. Nelson, Ford Foundation

AUTOMATION

- Closed circuit TV
- Broadcasting studio and control room
- Each classroom with receiving set
- Foreign language laboratory with many program sources
- Reading laboratory with reading machines and related materials for student practice. A Listen and Read apparatus with ear phones for group practice
- Overhead projector at each teaching station with mounted screen. A visual aids laboratory with staff artist to prepare visuals
- Readily available movie projectors, tapes, records, slide projectors and other audio visual materials
- Two large sound-equipped lecture halls, each with
 - 200 seating capacity
 - Automatic, sound-proof walls that can divide the large hall into three smaller classrooms
 - Professionally equipped projection booth
 - Two large screens for viewing movies, closed circuit TV, video-taped lectures and other teaching presentations
- A fully equipped machine laboratory
- A specially designed and equipped electronics center for instructional and student use

AUTOMATION - Continued

- A communications room with transmitters and receivers for instruction in radio and related student activities
- A complete building situated between Nova and the Broward County Junior College that supplies air conditioning or heat through underground ducts to both schools. A push-button console that gives remote control of room by room climate
- Data Processing Center
 - IBM Keypunch machine
 - IBM Sorting machine
 - High speed electronic computer facilities operated by the Broward Public School System and available to Nova for processing data. Capable and forward-looking programmers at the county level who make this service one of the most outstanding in the country
- "Filmsort 1000" processor camera
 - First installation in Florida
 - Photographs documents
 - Processes the microfilm inside the camera
 - In one minute delivers finished film mounted in a "film-sort" aperture card
- Filmac 100 Reader-Printer
 - Independent viewing of aperture cards with blown-up image on an 8-1/2 x 11 inch screen
 - At the press of a button a permanent copy of the screened image processed for immediate use
- IBM ten-column selector sorting machine
 - Sorts aperture cards at the rate of 400 a minute
 - Sorts ten columns in one pass

"Every individual of any caliber and every civic organization, too, should be clamoring to be a part of it. Make no mistake - it's going to have a profound effect." -

**Tom Kearns, President
Broward Manufacturers Association**

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

- Nova Plan based upon research**
- 25,000 miles of travel by a committee visiting 28 school systems searching for new proven procedures in education**
- A continuing program of educational research aimed at improving teaching**
- Research to continue during the life of the school**
- Research to determine the progress of Nova students compared to a control group**
- Cost analyses involving capital outlay and operational expenses - physical plant, instruction, individual student**
- Surveys and analyses of student achievement in both products and processes**
- Development of evaluation instruments**
- Analyses of teaching processes**
- Surveys of staff, student and community attitudes**
- Follow-up surveys of former Nova students to determine their subsequent success**
- Evaluation of in-service training programs**
- Research into the degree and kind of inter-relationships that exist among students, between disciplines, between activities and programs, among staff personnel, and between school and parents**

SUMMARY

The exciting venture at South Florida Education Center to update education is the kind of bold step that can be taken by any growing community that is willing to make the sacrifice.

If public schools are to keep pace with the advances in cultural, social and economic life, then bold steps to improve education are necessary and mandatory.

It is inexcusable to allow less than the best. Time is too precious and the product is too important for parents and teachers to fail in a task that cannot be repeated.

New programs of education are developing slowly but surely in isolated islands of experimentation. Valuable as these islands of successful improvements are to education, they are not sufficient for the changing demands of a dynamic society in a scientific age. Improvement in education by slow evolution will be too late for the task of preparing the minds of students to succeed at work that does not yet exist and whose nature cannot yet be imagined. South Florida Education Center was created in answer to this urgent need for scientific methods of learning in a scientific age.

Modern, functional and attractive, Nova High School is the first facility in an education complex planned for South Florida Education Center that will provide a continuum of learning from

kindergarten to doctoral degree. Nova is a preview of things to come, a prototype of daring unconventional education concepts.

These concepts are the result of action research. The Broward County Board of Public Instruction sent teams of educators, headed by Arthur B. Wolfe, director of Nova, on a two-year nation-wide study. The purpose was to find the newest and the best, the most efficient and the most successful ideas for modernizing education. Eclectically and creatively, the Nova Plan is built upon the significant findings of this research.

Excelling national averages is an expected by-product at Nova, but is not the major goal. The essential aim is to make learning and achieving interesting, challenging and exciting to the student. Through the process of inquiry, the student sets out on a quest - the discovery of knowledge. Curriculum, lectures, lessons and activities are planned to encourage each student to assume major responsibility for his own learning and progress. The instructor, playing down his role as dispenser of information, joins each student as an intellectual peer, and becomes a fellow-seeker in the adventure of learning.

The Nova student learns the very processes of how to learn, equipping himself for successful mastery of today's knowledge and for readiness to learn and to creatively contribute to tomorrow's new discoveries.

* * *